Phoenix Historical Society
Organized in 1998; Opened in 1999

Margaret (Bolz) Croly, Editor
rlcmac@outlook.com

The Gasburg Gazette

Volume 22, Issue 2

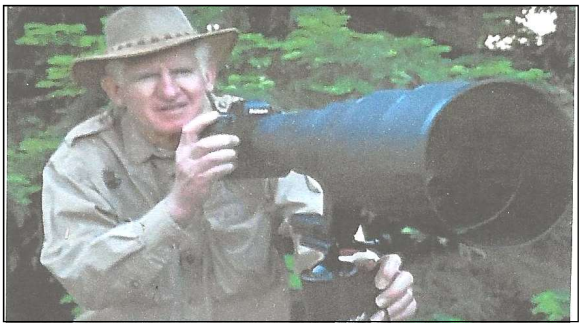
Spring 2026

Inside this issue:

Flag Raising Ceremony	2
Aerial Photo	2
Board Members	2
George McUne	3
This 'n That	4

Jim James has had local photography shows occasionally at the Rogue Valley Manor and the Craterian Ginger Rogers Theater as well as some local galleries in the Rogue Valley, Bend, and Portland, but has sold mostly to private individuals by word of mouth in the past. At present he is working on a web page, but can be reached at email:soafrica@charter.net and phone number: 541-899-7775.

Richard E. "Jim" James



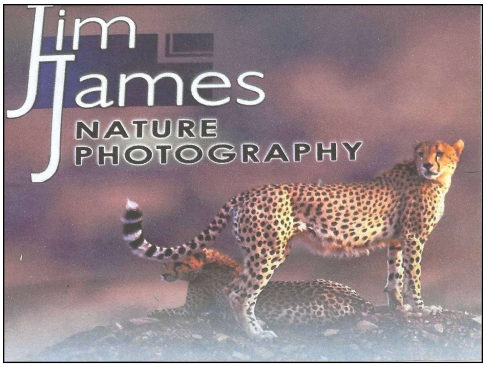
Richard E. "Jim" James moved from Montana to Oregon with his family as a young boy and was brought up on the Oregon coast and in the Rogue Valley. He is a 1957 graduate of Phoenix high School receiving awards in Chemistry, Elk's Leadership, Debate, Boy's Activities, Outstanding Senior among others.

Jim earned his medical degree from the University of Washington School of Medicine. Dr. Richard James specializes in orthopedic surgery with additional expertise in sports medicine. With 60 years of experience, he focuses on treating injuries and conditions affecting bones, joints, muscles, and ligaments. His sports medicine training allows him to care for both recreational and competitive athletes dealing with activity-related injuries. He maintains hospital affiliations with Portland VA Medical Center, Providence Medford Medical Center, and Asante Rogue Regional Medical Center. Patients can receive care from him in both Medford and Portland, Oregon.

Except for a number of years spent in many Western and Midwestern states, as well as Alaska while Jim was in the Air Force and medical training as a physician and orthopedic surgeon, he has lived in Oregon most of his life. He and his wife, Valerie, raised their four children mostly in the Rogue Valley.

He spent most of his time as a boy fishing, hunting, hiking and observing animals in the wilderness and later working summers in the woods while attending high school, college and medical school.

Forty years ago while in the Air Force he and his family moved to Alaska and it was here that he first became seriously interested in nature photography while living in one of the last great wilderness areas in North America. He continued to develop a keen interest in wildlife photography which has become a serious passion in the past ten years. Still using slide film format exclusively until one year ago, Jim has remained a "purist" and does not computer-generate his images with only occasional and minimal digital enhancement.



Partially retired, Jim spends his free time photographing wildlife throughout the world and hopes to bring a better understanding and enjoyment of some of God's most unique and beautiful creatures to others through his pictures.

A Flag Raising Ceremony in Front of the Phoenix City Hall

At that time the City Hall was located on 2nd Street in what is now the museum building.

The ceremony was held on Friday evening at the start of the Memorial Day week-end festivities in 1959. A group of townsfolk, the mayor and members of the city council participated in the ceremonies to dedicate the new flag pole erected in front of the building.

Mayor Arthur MacKintosh made a short speech. The Reverend William Saladin of the Phoenix Presbyterian church gave the benediction. Elvin Ray Claflin presented a U.S. Marine Corp flag on behalf of his son Lynn, who was killed on Iwo Jima in World War II. Following Claflin's brief address, two other sons, Cecil and Vincent Claflin attached the flag to the halyards of the new pole. Then Vincent Claflin slowly raised the colors as Harry Kannasto, Phoenix High School music instructor, blew taps.

Lynn Claflin had served in the Third Marines in the Solomon Islands in the South Pacific. He was one of four survivors in his company from that action. Following treatment for his wounds Sgt. Claflin was sent to Iwo Jima with the Fifth Marines. After his death, the E. R. Claflin family received on his behalf, the bronze star. His unit received the U.S. Navy unit citation and Presidential citation.

Thanks to Dorothy Cotton for sharing this article.

Aerial Photograph, ca 1926

This photograph shows Jackson County Fairground buildings to the left and Barber Field runway and hangar to the right.

This includes where the Southgate Walmart property and Fred Meyer complex are today.

Thanks to Gwen Pettey and SOHS.

Phoenix Historical Society Board Members

Dick Croly: President

Ken Kantor: Vice President

Dorothy Cotton: Secretary

Dorothy Cotton: Treasurer

Lorraine Sexton

Margaret Croly

George McUne and Pioneer Village

Pioneer Village — Jacksonville, Oregon

805 North 5th Street is the namesake of an earlier 5-acre Pioneer Village constructed by George McUne between 1961 and 1964.

Perhaps no one loved history more than George McUne (MUH-kyoon) of Jacksonville, Oregon. He was a collector of antiques and historic buildings. He built replica horse-drawn vehicles and in 1961 turned his hobbies into a five-acre tourist attraction.

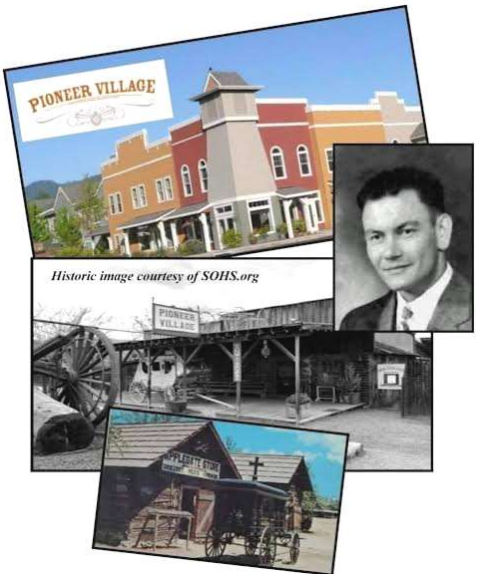
For over twenty years, McUne's Pioneer Village, located along the main road into Jacksonville, was an adventure into the past with twenty buildings filled with historic relics. Within the village stockade, visitors watched western fights and "black snake whip" demonstrations. They took pony rides and boarded a stagecoach pulled by UcUne's faithful mules, Fibber and Mollie. He made repairs using a forge in his blacksmith shop where he also hand rolled wagon tires.

Authentic buildings brought from nearby locations included the Yreka Dogtown Saloon, still sporting bullet holes in the front door, a jail, a moon-shiner's cabin, and a little red schoolhouse that served Valley Falls students in southeast Oregon from 1880-1919.

When George died in 1979, the passion for his historical treasures died with him. His collection of 8,000 items was sold in 1985, leaving an empty lot that would later become the Pioneer Village Retirement Community.

George McUne planned and organized the 1976 Applegate wagon trip. He conceived the idea when he was a teamster on the Oregon Centennial wagon Trip from Independence, Missouri, to Oregon in 1959. He and his family then spent four months on the old Oregon Trail in a covered wagon pulled by Missouri mules. McUne thought it important for younger people to understand how people used to live, so they might better appreciate modern life and its conveniences. Cars, light switches and water faucets are taken for granted today. Growing up in rural Washington, McUne lived a pioneering life: his mother cooked in a logging camp, cut wood with a cross-cut saw and shot game for the table. George quit school in the eighth grade to help support the family.

George UcUne, was well qualified to be wagon master. For fifteen years he'd owned and operated Pioneer Village, a living museum of the old west, where he ran a blacksmith shop and maintained many horse-drawn wagons.



Planning and preparing for the two-week wagon trip took nearly two years. He built all six wagons, working on each wagon for two months. The wagon boxes were built from cedar, to keep them light. The running gears were rebuilt from parts of the more than fifty historic wagons at Pioneer Village in Jacksonville. He made the wagons twelve feet long (two feet shorter than the original covered wagons) because of the rough, mountainous country they had to cross.

Thanks to Gwen Pettey and *Heritage Magazine.*

Phoenix Historical Society & Museum
607 N. Church Street
P. O. Box 1466
Phoenix, Oregon 97535

Telephone (541) 512-0614

Open Thursday thru Saturday
1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Any historical information regarding Phoenix would be much appreciated by anyone receiving this newsletter. Please send to above address or editor.

Become a member of Phoenix Historical Society for just $10.00 a year per person. Join now and help preserve the history of Phoenix and the surrounding area.
Regular PHS meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month at **7:00 p.m. at the Phoenix Museum.**

This 'n That

Phoenix Pioneer Cemetery

There is a quiet place on the edge of our community where history still speaks--if we are willing to listen.

Beneath weathered headstones and shaded by aging trees lies our historic pioneer cemetery, the final resting place of the men, women, and children who first shaped this land. They were farmers, builders, teachers, and dreamers. They endured hardship and uncertainty so that future generations--ours--could thrive.

Today that sacred ground needs our help.

Time, weather and limited resources have taken their toll. Stones are fading, pathways are eroding, and the stories etched into marble and granite rik being lost forever. Without care and preservation, this irreplaceable link to our shared heritage may slowly disappear.

After much thoughtful discussion and with deep respect for those interred there, the Phoenix Pioneer Cemetery Board is in discussions with the City of Phoenix about taking over stewardship of the cemetery to ensure its care and protection in perpetuity. This step reflects our commitment to long-term preservation, providing the stability and resources needed to safeguard the cemetery for generations to come.

- Brandi Randall -

It is with sadness that we share the loss of longtime member, supporter and friend of the Phoenix Historical Society, Nelda Wallace Hanscom, who passed away March 29, 2026. She will be dearly missed. Our sympathy is extended to her family and those who loved her.

2nd Annual
Spring Fling Potluck
Also Celebrating the 250th Anniversary of Our Country
June 9th at 6:00 pm
Phoenix Museum
607 N Church Street
Please bring a dish of food to share and your own place setting
Drinks will be provided